

PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 214327

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Verschueren et al.

Art Unit: Unassigned

Application No. Unassigned

Examiner: Unassigned

Filed: November 8, 2001

For: **APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATIC
PLATE-COATING AND CLEANING**

**AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFICATION, CLAIMS, AND ABSTRACT
MADE VIA PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Amendments to existing claims:

7. (Amended) A printing system comprising a lithographic printing press and a plate-making apparatus according to [any of the preceding claims] claim 1.

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PENDING CLAIMS AFTER ENTRY OF PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

1. An off-press plate-making apparatus comprising :

- means for applying on a substrate a continuous image-recording layer which is capable of forming a lithographic image upon exposure to heat or light and optional processing; and
- means for removing the lithographic image from the substrate.

2. An off-press plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 which further comprises :

- means for exposing the image-recording layer to heat or light; and, optionally,
- means for processing the exposed image-recording layer.

3. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the means for applying a continuous image-recording layer on a substrate comprise a spray nozzle or an ink-jet nozzle for applying a coating solution on the substrate.

4. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the means for removing the lithographic image from the substrate comprise a spray nozzle or an ink-jet nozzle for applying a cleaning liquid on the substrate.

5. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising means for preparing an emulsion by mixing an organic liquid with an aqueous liquid.

6. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising means for separating an emulsion in an organic phase and an aqueous phase.

7. A printing system comprising a lithographic printing press and a plate-making apparatus according to claim 1.

8. A printing system according to claim 7 wherein the plate-making apparatus is mechanically coupled to the printing press by plate-loading means for transferring a printing plate precursor or a printing master from the plate-making apparatus to the printing press and/or by plate-unloading means for transferring a printing master from the printing press to the plate-making apparatus.

9. A printing system according to claim 8 wherein the printing press is a multi-color printing press and wherein the plate-loading means and/or the plate-unloading means comprise a stacking apparatus.

10. A printing system according to claim 9 wherein the stacking apparatus is integrated in the plate-making apparatus.

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